on 01.11.1999. Before declaration as Nidhis these companies are non-banking financial companies and have to comply with the directions of Reserve Bank of India. Most of these companies have violated the directions of Reserve Bank of India in respect of acceptance of deposits and liquidity ratio. The Reserve Bank of India is conducting inspection of all these companies individually to find out the eligibility of these companies for nidhi status. On receipt of Reserve Bank of India's report in respect of each case, the applications of these companies would be processed. As on 31.01.2000, 89 applications were pending with the department.

Dignity of the Office of Judges

1323. SHRI SATISHCHANDRA SITARAM PRADHAN: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an additional sessions Judge of Mumbai is found involved in the collection of ransom;

(b) whether there are any more such cases or incidences which have come to the notice of the Government; and

(c) if so, what action Government propose to take to improve the dignity of the office of the Judges?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) According to information received from the Registry, High Court (Appellate Side), Bombay, a case has been registered u/s 387 and 120B of the Indian Penal Code r/w 3(1)(ii)(2) of the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crimes Act against one Additional Sessions Judge.

(b) No other such case has come to the notice of the Government.

(c) Does not arise.

Posts of judges lying vacant in Supreme Court and High Courts

†1324. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of posts of judges lying vacant in Supreme Court and different High Courts of the States;

(b) whether Government have taken any action to fill up the vacant posts of the judges; and

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.